

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application.

1-75. (Canceled).

76. (Previously Presented) A computer network including a multi-tier licensing system comprising:

a user tier including user computers;

a remote node tier including remote nodes enabling users to run a licensed software program, at least some remote nodes allowing multiple users at multiple user computers to run the licensed software program concurrently, the remote nodes periodically producing indications of the software usage of the licensed software program by users associated with the remote nodes; and

a master node tier including a master node periodically receiving the indications from the remote nodes and calculating a total number of licensed software users, the master node evaluating a license allocation condition using the total number of licensed software users, wherein a sanity scan checking processes running on the remote nodes is done on at least one subset of the remote nodes, where a scan result message is sent from the remote nodes to the master node with at least some of the indications if the sanity scan was successful, the master node checks whether the scan result messages has been received from all of the remote nodes and deallocates any licenses allocated to users of any of the remote nodes from which a scan result message has not been received.

77. (Previously presented) The computer network including a multi-tier licensing system of claim 76, wherein the remote nodes and master node run licensing software.

78. (Previously presented) The computer network including a multi-tier licensing system of claim 76, wherein the master node is selected as the master node from the nodes running the licensing software.

79. (Previously presented) The computer network including a multi-tier licensing system of claim 76, wherein the remote nodes serve the licensed software to the users in the user tier.

80-82. (Canceled).

83. (Previously presented) The computer network including a multi-tier licensing system of claim 76, wherein the master node compares the total number of licensed software users to a predetermined value.

84. (Previously presented) The computer network including a multi-tier licensing system of claim 83, wherein the master node initiates a license lockout grace period if the total number of licensed software users exceeds the predetermined value.

85. (Previously presented) The computer network including a multi-tier licensing system of claim 83, wherein the master node sends a warning message if the total number of licensed software users exceeds a predetermined value.

86. (Previously presented) The computer network including a multi-tier licensing system of claim 83, wherein the predetermined value is determined from a maximum number of licenses.

87. (Previously presented) The computer network including a multi-tier licensing system of claim 76, wherein the indications are sent to the master node asynchronously.

88. (Previously presented) The computer network including a multi-tier licensing system of claim 76, wherein the indications are sent periodically.

89. (Previously presented) The computer network including a multi-tier licensing system of claim 76, wherein computer network is a distributed computer network.

90. (Previously presented) The computer network including a multi-tier licensing system of claim 76, wherein the indications are counts of the numbers of licensed software users associated with the remote nodes.

91. (Previously Presented) A multi-tier licensing system method comprising:

at remote nodes of a remote node tier, enabling users to run a licensed software program, at least some remote nodes allowing multiple users at multiple user computers in a user tier to run the licensed software program concurrently;

at the remote nodes, periodically producing indications of the software usage of the licensed software program by users associated with the remote nodes; and

at a master node, periodically receiving the indications from the remote nodes and calculating a total number of licensed software users, the master node evaluating a license allocation condition using the total number of licensed software users, wherein a sanity scan checking processes running on the remote nodes is done on at least one subset of the remote nodes, where a scan result message is sent from the remote nodes to the master node with at least some of the indications if the sanity scan was successful, the master node checks whether the scan result messages has been received from all of the remote nodes and deallocates any licenses allocated to users of any of the remote nodes from which a scan result message has not been received.

92. (Previously presented) The method of claim 91, wherein the remote nodes and master node run licensing software.

93. (Previously presented) The method of claim 91, wherein the master node is selected as the master node from the nodes running the licensing software.

94. (Previously presented) The method of claim 91, wherein the remote nodes serve the licensed software to the users in the user tier.

95-97. (Canceled).

98. (Previously presented) The method of claim 91, wherein the master node compares the total number of licensed software users to a predetermined value.

99. (Previously presented) The method of claim 98, wherein the master node initiates a license lockout grace period if the total number of licensed software users exceeds the predetermined value.

100. (Previously presented) The method of claim 98, wherein the master node sends a warning message if the total number of licensed software users exceeds a predetermined value.

101. (Previously presented) The method of claim 98, wherein the predetermined value is determined from a maximum number of licenses.

102. (Previously presented) The method of claim 91, wherein the indications are sent to the master node asynchronously.

103. (Previously presented) The method of claim 91, wherein the indications are sent periodically.

104. (Previously presented) The method of claim 91, wherein computer network is a distributed computer network.

105. (Previously presented) The method of claim 91, wherein the indications are counts of the numbers of licensed software users associated with the remote nodes.

106-107. (Canceled)

108. (New) A computer readable storage medium comprising code for a master node, the master node interacting with a remote node tier including remote nodes enabling users to run a licensed software program, at least some remote nodes allowing multiple users at multiple user computers to run the licensed software program concurrently, the remote nodes periodically producing indications of the software usage of the licensed software program by users associated with the remote nodes, the code for the master node comprising:

- code to periodically receive indications of the software usage of a licensed software program by users associated with remote nodes from the remote nodes, wherein scan result messages are received by the master node from the remote nodes with at least some of the indications if a sanity scan checking process running on the remote node was successful;

- code to calculate a total number of licensed software users;

- code to evaluate a license allocation condition using the total number of licensed software users, and

code to check whether the scan result messages has been received from all of the remote nodes and deallocate any licenses allocated to users of any of the remote nodes from which a scan result message has not been received.

109. (New) The computer readable storage medium of claim 108, wherein the remote nodes and master node run licensing software.

110. (New) The computer readable storage medium of claim 109, wherein the master node is selected as the master node from the nodes running the licensing software.

111. (New) The computer readable storage medium of claim 108, wherein the remote nodes serve the licensed software to the users in a user tier.

112. (New) The computer readable storage medium of claim 108, wherein the master node compares the total number of licensed software users to a predetermined value.

113. (New) The computer readable storage medium of claim 108, wherein the master node initiates a license lockout grace period if the total number of licensed software users exceeds the predetermined value.

114. (New) The computer readable storage medium of claim 108, wherein the master node sends a warning message if the total number of licensed software users exceeds a predetermined value.

115. (New) The computer readable storage medium of claim 108, wherein the predetermined value is determined from a maximum number of licenses.

116. (New) The computer readable storage medium of claim 108, wherein the indications are sent to the master node asynchronously.

117. (New) The computer readable storage medium of claim 108, wherein the indications are counts of the numbers of licensed software users associated with the remote nodes.